

16 A. H. 15
S E R I O U S * * :

C A L L,

In tender Compassion

TO THE

S I N N E R S

I N

S I O N,

Of what Rank, or Degree soever.

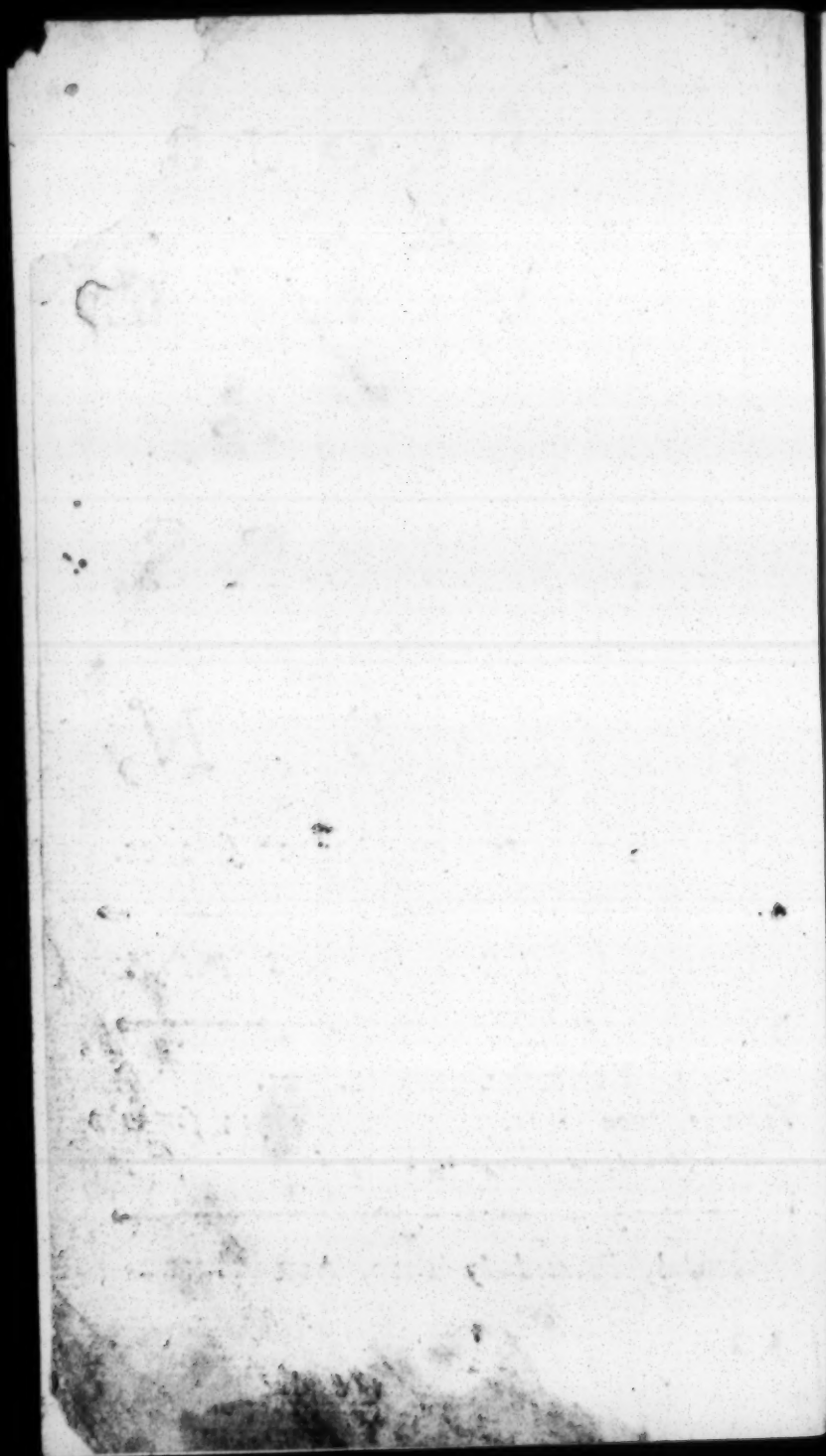
By FRANCES HENSHAW.

EZEKIEL XXXIII, XI.

*Turn ye, turn ye from your evil Ways; for why
will ye die, O House of Israel?*

Kendal, Printed by THO. ASHBURNER.

Ken



A

Serious CALL.

EZEKIEL XXXIII, XI.

*Turn ye, turn ye from your evil Ways ; for why
will ye die, O House of Israel ?*

THE Lord has a Controversie with his People in this present Age, and is drawing near unto Judgment, wherein He will plead with them. and make himself known to be the Power, that ought to bear Rule, not only in Heaven, but also on Earth in the Hearts of the Children of Men ; and as one that has gone thro' various Dispensations, and witness'd the Terrors of the Lord for Sin,

A 2

I

I feel a Pressure on my Spirit to reason with, and, if possible, to persuade my Fellow Creatures, especially those who profess the Truth as it is in Jesus, to flee as for their Lives from every Appearance of Evil which it join'd with, will inevitably bring Death, and draw down the Displeasure of God sooner or later upon the Soul ; for God is faithful, who will render to every Man a Reward according to his Works.

Now by the Things which are seen, *viz* the Beauty and Order of the outward Creation, it is evident to all, whom the God of this World hath not blinded, that there is a supreme Power, by whom all Things were made, and are preserved and provided for by his Providential Care, who is infinite in Wisdom, Justice and Mercy, waiting long to be gracious, even to those who have rejected
the

the secret Reproofs of Instruction, and refus'd to listen to the Voice of the Charmer charm he never so wisely; yet he has not ceas'd to follow, and if there be the least Disposition in the Soul to turn to him that smites would live from Sin, and the dismal Consequences of it, both here and hereafter; for the Truth of the Apostle's Doctrine will certainly be verified in all: *The Wages of Sin is Death*, Romans vi. 23. And as long as it has Place, and reigns in our mortal Bodies, we feel the Motions and Effects of it drawing down our Affections from the Almighty Creator into an inordinate Love for visible Enjoyments, such as our Senses can feed on, and be gratified with, whilst the Soul, the immortal and most valuable Part in us, groans under the Weight of Divine Displeasure, and finds itself at an infinite distance from God, its true Centre, and altogether

a Stranger to that Peace, which alone can render it happy here, and give an Admittance into Glory hereafter.

This, according to my Experience, I apprehend to be the State the Apostle spoke of respecting such as live without God in the World, in the Indulgence and Gratification of their sensual Appetites, being Lovers of Pleasure more than Lovers of God, than which I know not a more wretched and miserable State on this Side Eternity; to be a Slave to the Three great destructive Enemies to our present and future Peace, *The Lust of the Eye, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Pride of Life*. What Person, in whom any Spark of Light, or Reflection remains, would not rather chuse to bow to the Power that offers Redemption? tho' it be in the Way of close Judgment, and an absolute Cross to, and total forsaking of
those

those beloved Lusts and darling Inclinations, that have heretofore prevailed, and brought us into Captivity to the Law of Sin and Death, under which in an Agony of Spirit we are made to cry out ; *O ! wretched Man that I am, &c.*

This at one time or other will be the State of all, inasmuch as all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God, all must know a passing as through Death into Life, and witness the Body of Sin to be destroy'd in them by the Spirit of Judgment and of Burning, before they can witness Reconciliation and Peace with God, whose Controversie has been against Sin in all, in every Age and Dispensation. And I wou'd query of the most obstinate Offender, what Pleasure the Works of Iniquity afford ? When the just Judgments of God are revealed in the Soul, and are executed

executed on the Body of Sin, the transgressing Nature, to which divine Wrath is due and when the Fire of the Word lays hold of that Part in us, which is for the Fire, it tells us in a Language, which our strongest Arguments are not able to confute, *That the Wages of Sin is Death.*

These few Hints, concerning the Nature and Tendency of Sin, might be sufficient to such as have an Ear to hear, and are not stifling Conviction; but there are a Set of Men, for whom my Soul has mourn'd in secret before the Lord, in whom the Love of Pleasure is so prevalent, that it is the Deity they bow to, and the only one they desire to know and serve, being agreeable to the natural Inclination, and when any Checks of Conscience, or secret Whispers in the Soul are administered by the true God, they seek to stifle them, and by calling
to

to their Assistance the weak Weapons of human Reason endeavour to be wise above what is written, and arm themselves with Arguments against the Pleadings of God by his good Spirit in themselves, and also what proceeded from it, through the Prophets and Apostles, and like the wicked Husbandmen are not content with executing their Malice on the Servants, but when the Son appears they say in their Hearts (which Language God hates) *This is the Heir come let us kill him, &c.* This inward Revelation of the Son of God strikes at the very Root of our beloved and inordinate Passions, and will not suffer us to gratify them without Remorse, Who can endure it ? say they, let us arise and muster up all our Force against it, that if possible, we may suppress or overpower it, and be Lords of ourselves, and indulge our own Inclinations, without being thus

B

perpetually

perpetually reprov'd, and restricted by an higher Power.

Thus poor Man wanders from God, and strives to be ignorant of his Power manifested in the Soul, that like a wretched Outlaw he may rove at large, and sin with Impunity, yet even to such, *Wisdom utters her Voice, saying, how long ye simple ones will ye love Simplicity? &c* Why so hasty in pursuit of Destruction? stop a while, turn ye at my Reproof, come under my Discipline, and I will pour forth of my Spirit upon you; make known my Ways unto you, and guide your Feet in the Way of Peace.

Thus God calls by the Voice of his Son, the Wisdom that was with him before the World was formed, and the chosen Means, or Instrument to convey the true Knowledge of God to Man, which Means whosoever flights or rejects renders Salvation from Sin here impossible

impossible, and consequently must inherit the Wrath due to it hereafter: For however we may flatter or amuse ourselves, whilst in the Pursuit of Folly, we shall assuredly, when the Heat of Passion is a little abated, hear the Voice, which in the Cool of the Day called to *Adam* after his Transgression, and if Attention be given to it, will convince us of Sin, and where Power to overcome it is to be met with, even in his Name, and thro' Faith in his Power, who now appears inwardly as a Reprover to put an end to Sin, &c. thus by Grace we come to witness a being saved *thro' Faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the Gift of God*, not in our Power, nor at our Command, but administered when, and how he pleaseth.

And it hath been manifest to the Experience of some, that when Sin has prevailed, and the Offers of Grace been rejected, it has pleas'd God to

leave such for a Time, to let them see their own Wretchedness, and Insufficiency to overcome their own corrupt Nature, and the Temptations of that dark Power that seeks their Destruction, and suits all his Baits to the various Inclinations of such, as by refusing the Means of Help, unhappily fall under his Dominion, and are permitted for a Time to be led captive at his Will.

This, alas! is the state of many; some of whom are so far darkened, that they know it not, others, beholding their miserable Condition, and the need they are in of a Saviour, are brought to look on him, whom they have pierced, and mourn over him, yet cannot witness Remission of Sins thro' his Name, nor Reconciliation with God, until he be pleased to appear on their Behalf, as a Mediator, and advocate their Cause with offended Justice.

Thus

Thus, when we have sinned, must we come to witness an Advocate with the Father, even *Jesus Christ*, the Righteous, *who is the Propitiation for our Sins*, &c. neither can we find Salvation in any other Name or Power, for when he ceases to operate by his Grace and good Spirit in the Soul, the Works of Salvation must cease, or stand still, till he is pleased again to appear; the Truth of which I have been brought to experience, having been favoured with the Help of the Spirit, and also proved with the Withdrawings of it, during which I have found, to my inexpressible Sorrow, that no Work, how good soever in itself, has found Acceptance with God, nor brought Peace and Satisfaction to me; the Cause whereof I have been led to search into: But the Councils of God are deep, and when the Light, which makes manifest, is withdrawn, we grope as Persons in the dark,

dark, and are utterly incapable of understanding the Mystery of Godliness, tho' we feel the Mystery of Iniquity working in us, in the Manner express'd by the Apostle, First, *in Conception*; which, if not timely suppress'd, will be brought forth into Action, and that will inevitably be attended with Condemnation.

Thus *when Lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin, and Sin finished bringeth forth Death*, and the Place of Reception and Product, for this gradual Growth of Evil is the Heart of Man in its degenerate State, wherein 'tis deceitful above all Things, and inclines to Evil, and if not given up to that Power, that can search and cleanse it, is desperately wicked, for having the Seeds of Evil in it, the Product will be of the same Nature, until by the washing of Regeneration it comes to be purified and created anew in
Christ

Christ Jesus unto good Desires, which, if cherished, will produce good Words and Works.

Thus as Evil has had its gradual Growth in the Heart, it comes to be supprest by the Work of the new Creation, and where Sin has abounded, *Grace*, as 'tis received, and suffered freely to operate, *will much more abound.*

Happy Change indeed ! and greatly to be desir'd, and that all Mankind may come to witness it, is my earnest Request to the Author of every good and perfect Gift.

Having on this Subject enlarged beyond my Expectation, shall leave it to the serious Consideration of my Fellow Creatures, and if by making Application to the Spirit, which seeks the Good of all, and would sanctify and save all, the least Benefit may accrue

crue to any Person, may God have the Glory, the least Measure of whose Favour is more precious to me than Esteem or Approbation of the World, which I have neither sought, nor desired in thus exposing my Thoughts, but in Plainnets and Simplicity wrote my Experience.

K E N D A L, 10th
2d. Mo^r 1744.



e
e
n
l,
t-
s,
e